

2022 COVID Update

As we enter a new year and the COVID landscape continues to evolve it's a good idea to revisit your practice's approach to this important issue. Many practices report:

- Information can be difficult to come by, and be found to be inconsistent, inaccurate or illogical.
- Strains and infection rates change rapidly.
- Guidelines can seem ambiguous.
- Protocols can seem tedious and difficult to uphold over a long duration.

It is understandable that this can create fatigue and frustration.

In a bigger sense, the idea is to keep doctors, staff, visitors and patients safe, which practices have been doing for a long time. Keeping an eye on a common-sense approach will improve the participation of others and outcomes overall.

- Avoid scenarios that involve large numbers of people congregating and sharing food and other items.
- Wear masks in meetings and common areas, in addition to upholding safety protocols for patient care.
- Wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizer.
- Promptly report symptoms and exposure to management and let management inform others of the need for testing, quarantine or adjustment to work.
- Follow guidelines for vaccination, testing, quarantine and return to work with the assistance of and coordination with management.

At an upcoming huddle or staff meeting, take a moment to thank staff for their efforts to maintain safety for the practice and patients. Acknowledge challenges but get across the truest intention of the doctor and management to continue safety measures for the good of all.

Below you will find resources for updated ADA and CDC guidelines. Please remember to also investigate any state specific guidelines that your Governor might have put into place.

ADA – For the most up-to-date ADA information please visit [ADA.org/virus](https://www.ada.org/virus). Please note that the ADA has not issued any new policy changes or updates since July of 2021.

- Screenings of both staff, nonemployee visitors and patients are still necessary. And those with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID 19 should not be permitted to enter the practice.
- Doctors should use their best judgment when making decisions about treating or allowing entry to the practice.
- Hazard assessments are required by OSHA. Practices must have an exposure control plan for COVID 19. The hazard assessment should be repeated routinely as COVID 19 surges.

CDC – [CDC Updates and Shortens Recommended Isolation and Quarantine Period for General Population | CDC Online Newsroom | CDC](#)

Quarantine and Isolation – As of December 27, 2021 the CDC has shortened the recommended isolation time from 10 days for people with COVID 19 to 5 days **IF** asymptomatic, with another 5 days of mask wearing around all others. The changes for quarantine in those who are unvaccinated (or more than 6 months out from their initial shots or two months out from the Johnson and Johnson shot) is 5 days, with strict mask wearing for an additional 5 days. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine after an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after.